

**Detailed Meeting Notes  
Hamilton Army Airfield Restoration Advisory Board  
Hamilton School, Multi-Purpose Room,  
Novato, California  
February 19, 2003**

**Attendance**

**RAB Members Present:**

Thomas Macchiarella; Naomi Feger; Ray Zimny; Jim McAlister; Jim Ponton; Preston Cook; Tunstall Lang; Patricia Eklund; Theresa McGarry; Richard A. Draeger; Sabrina Molinari; Marucia Britto; Joan Dekelbourn.

**RAB Members Absent:**

Karol Raymer; Jack Walton; Lance McMahan; Thomas Hinman; Manuel Meir; Ed Keller; Matthew McCarron; Andre Klein.

**Others Present:**

Joy Lanzaro; Hugh Ashley; Samantha Calamari; Travis Williamson; Jim Davies; Scott Carlson; Angela Carlson; John Kaiser; Elena Belsky.

**Welcoming Remarks**

Tunstall Lang welcomed the community to the February 19, 2003 meeting of the Hamilton Army Airfield Restoration Advisory Board (RAB). The meeting began at 7:15 p.m.

**Navy BRAC Update — Thomas Macchiarella, DODHF Novato BEC**

*Project Update:*

The Remedial Design Work Plan was finalized on December 27, 2002. The Navy is now working with the regulatory agencies on developing a work plan for the installation of a few more bedrock wells in the area of the gas station.

The Draft FOST for the sale area (which is the former gas station at the corner of C Street and Main Gate) is in formal regulatory and public review. The review period will run from January 27 and February 25, 2003. Copies of the FOST are located at the South Branch of the Novato Public Library.

The Navy finds the property is suitable to transfer for its intended use subject to the following restrictions, which are typical for this type of site:

- Dewatering of excavations is prohibited unless conducted in accordance with regulatory approved work plan.
- New groundwater wells are prohibited unless approved by appropriate agencies. Disturbance of existing wells is prohibited, unless approved by appropriate agencies.
- Construction and occupation of residential structures or daycare centers is prohibited.

- If Building 970 is demolished, any contaminated soil beneath it must be removed and disposed of in accordance with all applicable regs for hazardous substances and hazardous waste.

The restrictions listed above were originally described as part of the selected remedy in the Final Corrective Action Plan (CAP).

The Navy is working with the regulatory agencies to develop a Land Use Covenant (LUC). The purpose of a LUC is to grant the State of California the same rights that the Navy will retain upon transfer of the property, including access rights, and the right to enforce the restrictions mentioned previously.

Pat Eklund: On Building 970 site, has the Navy tested any soil beneath that Building, and if so, is it contaminated?

Mr. Macchiarella: Yes, Building 970 had various tanks associated with the operation of the gas station, and nearby there were some waste oil tanks and oil/water separators. When the Navy removed those tanks in 1999 or 2000, the Navy removed as much of the contaminated soil as possible, without affecting the structure of the building. There is a significant amount of soil data to show the remaining residual low level contamination.

Pat Eklund: What is the intent of the use of the property?

Mr. Macchiarella: The planned use is “neighborhood commercial”.

Preston Cook: If the building is going to be razed, why haven’t they already been razed and the soil remediated?

Mr. Macchiarella: The level of remediation of an area is based on its intended future use. The PBC (public benefit conveyance) area is intended for education and residential uses, and it is already suitable for that use. The sale area is intended for neighborhood commercial use, and the Navy’s investigations indicate that the site is suitable for that use as it currently stands. The regulatory agencies requested that the deed include a provision for the safe removal of that soil in the event that the building is demolished. In most circumstances, the regulatory agencies do not require the demolition of a building to remove low level residual contamination.

Pat Eklund: Why are the regulatory agencies requesting this soil be cleaned up if the condition of the property meets the intended land use?

Mr. Macchiarella: While there is no risk at the site, the regulatory agencies are concerned that the soil could be moved to a location where it could cause a nuisance or safety concern. Therefore, they recommended that the deed include such a provision. The Navy can’t control when the building is razed or if it is razed by the future landowner, and typically the regulatory agencies will not make any property owner remove a building in order to get this type of low level contamination out, especially since it is not posing a threat to any resource right now.

Jim Ponton: There are 100 cubic yards of soil that is being considered. The soil is currently under the footings and foundation of the building, and does not pose a risk

where it is now. The Navy did a good job of excavating up to the foundations from the outside of the building and the inside. When the building is razed, we need to either make sure that the soil remains underground, or it is removed. Given the small quantity we are talking about, it might be most beneficial for the future owner to simply remove it.

Preston Cook: Regarding future development of the property, is this the best method to clean this site? It leaves a big unknown for future developers. Is it possible to remediate this soil before the sale of the property?

Mr. Macchiarella: There is an existing agreement for the sale of the property between the City of Novato and the Navy. This low level residual contamination beneath the footings is not the primary environmental issue at the site. The primary issue was the leaking of the gasoline underground storage tanks and the corresponding MTBE groundwater contamination, this issue is addressed in the regulatory framework. The Navy has delineated the low levels of residual contamination beneath the building foundation, so it is not an unknown quantity.

Pat Eklund: When the agreement was made, it was understood that the property would be properly cleaned up. The City of Novato will question if this added condition will meet the original intent of the agreement. It would increase the City's liability.

Mr. Macchiarella: The Navy will review the previous agreement and make sure that there isn't anything that was agreed to that the Navy has not fulfilled.

Preston Cook: Was there any money saved in not cleaning up this soil?

Mr. Macchiarella: The area under question involved a series of repair bays at the back of the station. It was a covered area with one open side so that cars could drive into it for service. In terms of getting the tanks and oil/water separators out and breaking up some of the concrete to remove additional soil it was not difficult. Even if the Navy had known at the outset that some additional contamination extended under the footings, I don't believe the Navy would have demolished the whole building for this amount of contaminated soil.

Pat Eklund: The Navy should reconsider, and tear down the building and remediate the contamination. I'd also ask the regulatory agencies to look at it again too. It makes local government very uncomfortable to be in the chain of ownership.

Theresa McGarry: When you take property from Department of Defense, and they have adequately characterized the status of the property, you are taking on the property with that understanding. If the building was removed and the contamination was found to be more significant or some new release was found, the Navy would have to come back and address that. There is a provision in Public Law (Section 330) that indemnifies future owners for damages associated with hazardous substances and petroleum products present on the parcel. When a property is intended for a commercial use, there is often residual contamination because the property is not required to be cleaned up to standards for residential use.

Jim Davies: The property was supposed to be cleaned and the price was set on that assumption. The developer has volunteered to tear the building down before property transfer so that the soil can be removed. Maybe the soil does not have to be hauled off site but it should be dealt with. It is the Navy's responsible to clean up this soil.

Public: Where would the excess materials be brought?

Jim Davies: It depends on how contaminated the soils are. It could be reused or brought to a landfill.

Pat Eklund: What is the problem with the Navy cleaning up the soil if the developer is offering to remove the building.

Mr. Macchiarella: The Navy will consider such a proposal if it is forwarded to the Navy from the developer or from the City.

Preston Cook: This is the first time in the two years I've served on the RAB that I have felt uncomfortable. The Navy should really reconsider cleaning up this soil.

Joy Lanzaro: Have the regulators discussed the use of the soil onsite scenario and if so, what's the difference between bringing the soil to the surface and spreading it around, or leaving it in place and paving over it, since it isn't a groundwater hazard?

Mr. Macchiarella: I think the concern from the regulatory agency was that unless someone was there on the particular day when the soils were exposed, and saw that the soils went right back into the ground, there was a concern that the soil might be brought to the surface and used for an unsuitable purpose.

#### *Annual Site Status Report*

This report covers the monitoring of the MTBE plume. The Navy monitors the concentration of MTBE and Benzene to ensure that it continues to decrease. The average concentration of both MTBE and Benzene has decreased over the year. Benzene levels are 50 percent lower than one year ago and 78 percent less than two years ago. MTBE levels are 26 percent lower than one year ago and 48 percent less than two years ago. Concentrations have decreased due to natural attenuation and the remedial methods such as bio-sparging.

#### *Annual Site Status Report Recommendations*

The Groundwater Monitoring Plan is evaluated yearly. Recommendations for changes to the Plan are presented in the Annual Site Status Reports. Recommendations for 2003 are to adjust the sampling frequency of some monitoring wells, to remove some chemical analytes from the monthly monitoring program, to combine monthly reports into the quarterly reports, and to adjust the reporting frequency to semi-annually. The Navy will not implement these recommendations without approval from the Water Board.

### *Bio-sparging System Operation*

The Bio-sparging system started on September 6, 2002. It is focused on the highest concentration area of the plume. Although the plume does not pose a health risk, the Navy is remediating the plume in order to achieve the Water Board's ultimate clean-up goal of the site, which is drinking water standards. The system injects air into the aquifer to provide oxygen to the existing microbes that degrade the hydrocarbons.

The Navy performs quarterly monitoring over the whole plume, and also zooms in monthly on this particular portion of the plume through the use of about 10 performance goal wells to track Biosparging system effectiveness. The wells that exist in the sandy soil zone are the wells with the highest concentration, and the Navy has seen good reductions in these areas.

The Navy also performs monthly soil-gas sampling to ensure safe and effective system operation. Field measurements include sparging flowrates, injection pressures, groundwater elevation, DO concentration, and soil-gas measurements including VOCs, O<sub>2</sub> and CO<sub>2</sub>.

### *Future Activities*

- Routine bio-sparging operation and monitoring. Monthly groundwater sampling of performance goal monitoring wells to track treatment effectiveness. Monthly soil-gas sampling to ensure safe and effective system operations.
- Summit Draft Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Plan.
- Quarterly groundwater monitoring event to be conducted in May 2003.
- Finalize Bedrock Well Installation Work Plan.

Pat Eklund: Why did MW5 go up?

Mr. Macchiarella: MW5 is just outside of the sandy channel area in an area that probably has clay or silty clay, which is not as easy to clean up. Rain events can also affect the concentration.

Public: What percentage of the overall plume contains the good sandy soil?

Mr. Macchiarella: I think it would be a small amount of the overall plume. However, what's important at that spot is how the sandy area cuts off the plume in a transverse direction to the axis of the plume. The highest concentrations in that part of the plume reside in that sandy area, so it's essentially an oxygen dam, an oxygen-rich zone for the microbes that, in effect, creates a treatment "wall".

## **Landfill 26, GSA, and North Antenna Field - Jim McAlister, USACE**

### **Landfill 26**

#### *Buffer Trench:*

The buffer trench and vent installation is now complete. The purpose of the buffer trench is to separate the landfill from Hamilton Meadows. The trench goes three feet into groundwater or to bedrock, whichever was encountered first. The trench is filled with gravel and has vent pipes that are connected to a collection tube in the trench to vent

methane to the ambient air. A completion report will be sent to the regulatory agencies within about 60 days.

*Risk assessment:*

The Corps has now responded to all agency comments, and has requested final approval of the Risk Assessment from the regulatory agencies. The agency has not yet formally approved the risk assessment, but indications are that they will. One of the drivers of the risk assessment was a contaminant called 1,3 butadiene, which the Corps had found in soil gas from Landfill 26. DTSC toxicologists have recently concluded that this contaminant is not as toxic as previously thought, which reduces the risk associated with this contaminant in the risk assessment.

*Annual Monitoring Event*

The annual monitoring event for 2002 was postponed due to limited Corps funding being used to install the impermeable layer. The event did occur in January and February and the monitoring report will be delivered to the regulatory agencies in May 2003.

*Timeframes*

Impermeable Barrier was installed in the buffer trench in January 2003.

Compliance with Board Order will be achieved in 2005-2008.

RWQCB permit compliance will begin in 2008.

Monitoring of Landfill 26 will continue throughout this time period.

Pat Eklund: Will migration of landfill gases to the north be studied?

Mr. McAlister: Yes, there is a comprehensive monitoring plan that requires semi-annual monitoring. The first event will occur this spring and then late fall to represent the high and low groundwater marks.

Jim Davies: What is the status of the ongoing monitoring in buffer zone and Hamilton Meadows?

Mr. McAlister: Methane continues to be detected along the south side of the Landfill that is along the west side of the Hamilton Meadows area. There has been a decrease of contaminants in the southeastern portion of the Landfill where the buffer trench was placed. For instance near Lot 166, where methane was being detected in the soil gas at levels of 5 percent, methane is still slightly detectable in these areas but is at a much lower concentration. Methane is still detectable on the Landfill side of the trench in GMP 9 and in the trench itself.

The Lot 30 has remained constant, between 40 and 50 percent. In the buffer zone outside the trench, the Corps has detected very low levels of methane in the soil gas.

Jim Davies: Stakeholders should receive the regular monitoring report.

Mr. McAlister: A report was sent out in November. I generally send them electronically to the agencies. I can send a copy to you as well. Another monitoring event on Friday.

Pat Eklund: Why has the data or preliminary results not been brought to the meeting?

Mr. McAlister: This information will be distributed at the next RAB meeting.

Pat Eklund: Is Lot 30 not close to the trench?

Mr. McAlister: Lot 30 is adjacent to the Army property; the back fence of Lot 30 is next to the Army buffer zone. The trench is between the Landfill and Lot 30. One thing to keep in mind is that 50 feet either side of Lot 30 the methane level is either 2 or 3 percent or barely detectable. So it's a very localized phenomenon. As part of the Corps investigation, the Corps dug a trench 12 feet deep to try and determine if there was a source. The Corps did find layers of high organic material that would lead to methane. The area southwest of the Landfill contains what is known as the paleo-channel of Pacheco Creek, which is filled with high organic material. The Corps installed the buffer trench to eliminate the Landfill as a source of methane in that area. Now that the trench is installed, the Corps believes that it is the rich organics in that area that are the main contributors to methane at Lot 30. The Corps is preparing an investigation report on the work over the past year in the Hamilton Meadows area, and this theory will be one of the assertions in that report. The Corps has done Carbon 14 dating on the methane to determine the age and has determined that age to be 300 and 800 years old. Mr. McAlister should have a schedule for the production of this report next week.

Jim Davies: In the area where the 12-foot investigation trench was dug, we felt that the layer of organics was not that thick and would not therefore in our opinion be a huge producer of methane. The channel runs into Hamilton Meadows and we do not see these higher readings on other lots. So it's been a big mystery to all of us. There were a lot of big rocks in the trench and it looks like when the Army developed the area in the 1940s they put the rock there to fill in the streambed to get across it.

Mr. McAlister: So the developer is looking to put even more probes out there now? There were originally about 100 probes placed initially to monitor the methane, then another 170 probes for the risk assessment. So there are a lot of probes out there.

#### **North Antenna Field:**

##### ***Timeframes***

Remedial investigation- March 2003

Risk Assessment- completed by May 2003

Feasibility study- June 2003

OE clearance- October 2003

Decision document- November 2003

Remedial action- October 2005

The Corps has a draft Final Remedial Investigation out to the agencies, and hope to receive any comments by early March so the report can be finalized that month. The Risk Assessment is underway. The Corps just held a meeting with the agencies on the work plan in February, and will be submitting a Feasibility Study to the agencies in June. The

Corps did find a practice grenade in the field and once the work plan is finalized, the item will be destroyed.

## **Army BRAC Update: Hugh Ashley, BRAC**

### **Documentation and Field Work**

#### **Documentation**

##### *Main Airfield Parcel:*

- Record of Decision/Remedial Action plan (ROD/RAP) — The ROD/RAP is a design plan that sets forth the approach for cleaning up any residual contamination on the airfield parcel and contamination in the coastal salt marsh. The DTSC/RWQCB have agreed to the executive summary language, which lays the groundwork for the remediation process, including definitions and responsibilities. The Army's contractor is working closely with DTSC, RWQCB, and the Army to prepare the ROD/RAP. The public comment period is scheduled for May/June 2003. The ROD/RAP will cover the Inboard Area and Coastal Salt Marsh sites.
- Finding of Suitability for Early Transfer (FOSET) – FOSET will be revised based on the ROD/RAP executive summary. The FOSET does contain a statement about the condition of the property, since the property would be transferred prior to all the remediation work being completed. As Mr. Macchiarella stated, the Department of Defense considers the intended future use of the property, which in this case is a marsh and upland or transition zones. Therefore, the levels of contamination have to be protective of the biological receptors as well as human health. The public comment period is expected during Spring 2003.
- Environmental Baseline Survey (EBS) – The Army is also preparing an EBS that will support the information in the FOSET.

##### *Hospital Hill:*

The FOST has been signed, and the City has signed an offer of acceptance. Transfer of the property to the City of Novato is scheduled to be completed by April 15, 2003.

##### *Building 82*

The Army completed remedial work at Building 82. Although the regulators have not formally taken action, the RWQCB has suggested that they would agree that no further action is needed at this site.

##### *Coastal Salt Marsh:*

The Army provided a sampling data report to the regulators for review. The sampling was done in December 2001/January 2002. The report was submitted on 12/18/2002.

##### *POL Hill:*

The third round of groundwater sampling was completed and the full report on all three rounds of sampling was submitted to the regulators. The Corrective Action Plan (CAP) was forwarded for regulatory review this week. The Army is also working on a closure

report for remaining features on the site. The FOST is expected to go out for public comment Spring 2003.

Jim Davies: Is this parcel going to be transferred the City of Novato?

Mr. Ashley: Yes, my understanding is that the City will receive this property. The City has identified the site for open space and not for commercial or residential use. All the contaminated soil was removed but there is some contamination in the groundwater in the fractured bedrock. The Army will continue to monitor the residual contamination.

Jim Davies: Is the water treatment plant a part of this property?

Mr. Ashley: No, it is not a part of the property. The water treatment plant is on the Landfill property.

#### *Outparcel A-4:*

The FOST is complete and is available at the BRAC office, online, and at the South Branch Novato Public Library.

### **Next Steps**

#### *Main Airfield Parcel:*

- Complete the FOSET
- Update the Environmental Baseline Survey
- Complete CSM sampling data report
- Complete CMS Feasibility Study- Presents alternatives for remediation
- Determine investigation requirements for any new sites. This refers to archive search report sites that were abandoned and were identified in aerial photographs and site plans. Ms. Lanzaro has done a lot of research on these sites to identify their historic uses. These sites will be included in the ROD/RAP. The sites also include an area where there was allegedly improper disposal of hazardous materials. The Army has released a work plan for that area and will select a contractor to investigate the area further. If there are contaminants identified, this site would also be incorporated in the ROD/RAP.
- Complete the ROD/RAP- The ROD/RAP presents the recommend remedial alternatives for all Inboard Area and Coastal Salt March sites
- Transfer the property (August 2003)
- Implement Remedial Actions

Marucia Britto: When would the transfer of the Airfield parcel happen?

Mr. Ashley: The BRAC office is aiming for early transfer in August 2003.

Marucia Britto: When will the work activities start?

Ray Zimny: Wetland work will start as soon as the property is transferred. Some pipes in the wetland are already in place. Buildings will be demolished and preparations made for dredge sediment placement.

Naomi Ferger: There was a ROD/RAP for the inboard parcel. The Army, RWQCB, and DTSC have now agreed to reissue the ROD/RAP in order to allow the inboard and salt

marsh areas to be treated together. This was necessary in part because a portion of the inboard parcel that was proposed for early transfer was actually within the salt marsh. Once the ROD/RAP is complete a few other documents will be packaged together. The RWQCB will draw up site clean-up requirements for implementation of the ROD/RAP. There will also be an Implementation Agreement between the Army Corps and the Army. These will be part of the many components that are going to be put in the FOSET and brought to the Governor.

Pat Eklund: How long will it take to clean up before the dredge material will be brought in? A year? Two Years?

Mr. Ashley: We'd like to start bringing dredge material in this year. We are looking for a schedule from the Corps, Sacramento District.

Naomi Ferger: Some activities can go on in tandem, because the dredge material will be brought on site over a number of years. There are a lot of pieces that need to happen. There's the Biological Opinion from US Fish and Wildlife Service, BCDC has to do a consistency determination. State Land Commission has to be involved in writing the lease, since they own part of the coastal salt marsh.

Elena Belsky: I noticed in the Newsletter that the Army discusses the removal of soil from the Airfield, but the Army has not made the actual reports and comments from the agencies available to the public.

Mr. Ashley: The report is not final and cannot be released until then.

Elena Belsky: I did speak to Naomi Feger and she indicated that I could review the reports and comments in her office.

Ms. Lanzaro: Under the Freedom of Information Act, to which the Army must adhere, we can only forward final documents.

Elena Belsky: What were the DTSC's comments on that report?

Mr. Ashley: DTSC can comment on that.

Elena Belsky: I understand that DTSC has given the Army a deadline of responding to their comments. Has the Army provided written responses to the DTSC comments?

Mr. Ashley: No, but we will provide these responses as soon as we can.

Elena Belsky: In their comments, DTSC appears to have made a definitive statement regarding the lack of proper characterization of contaminants on the BRAC site. Can we extrapolate from that to other sites at Hamilton?

Mr. Ashley: No, and I have two comments. One, a representative from DTSC is entitled to have his opinion. Also, each regulator was asked whether they felt there was any question whether the sites were characterized properly for the risk assessment. The sites that you are speaking about both had five samples from the most recent sampling. The question regarding improper characterization came up from a five point composite sample that contained an elevated level of mercury and none of the samples that were used to characterize those sites had that high level of mercury, so we believe it was an anomaly.

## **Regulator's Updates**

Jim Ponton: Mr. Ponton and Ms. McGarry met with Mr. Macchiarella, Mr. McAlister, the Marin County of Environmental Health and walked Landfill 26 today.

Beyond what Mr. Macchiarella already related regarding the FOST for the gas station site, there has been work in finalizing the work plans and talking about ways to save money by reducing sampling and monitoring requirements as Mr. Macchiarella is proposing in his revised work plan. This will allow funding to be focused on remediation more than documentation, although documentation is important as well.

For Landfill 26, the agency has discussed the need for some repairs at the site, and is also proposing a meeting between the Army Corp and the regulators next month to talk about the trench data and to put together a presentation for the next RAB meeting. We have also been talking about the long-term schedule for investigation and remediation.

We understand that the FOST issue is a sensitive one for everyone. Mr. Ponton looks at it as finding the best way to manage the site in the long run. Given the size and the characterization of the site, it appears that the extent of soil contamination at the site is very limited.

Naomi Ferger: Reiterated that the ROD/RAP for the Inboard Coastal Salt Marsh is under a short time frame. At the next RAB meeting, hopes that there will be a bigger presentation on what is involved and what the process is going to be. There will be a quick turnaround time for those RAB members that want to review the ROD/RAP.

## **Administrative Issues - Tunstall Lang**

Preston Cook proposed that the RAB meet quarterly beginning in April 2003. Tunstall Lang asked other RAB members and the regulatory agencies if they favored this change. Ms. Lang favors meeting quarterly.

Pat Eklund favors quarterly meetings but if there are issues that arise additional meetings could be arranged.

Marucia Britto supports meeting quarterly and suggested meeting on the second Wednesday of the month.

Mr. Macchiarella supports quarterly meetings on the second Wednesday.

Pat Eklund requested that the next meeting be held on April 9, 2003.

### *Membership Assessment*

Pat Eklund clarified that both Richard Draeger and Sabrina Molinari both wish to continue membership on the RAB, so the RAB would be looking for two and perhaps three new members. Ms. Lanzaro did place a large advertisement in the Marin IJ

announcing the RAB membership drive. The Newsletter includes an article encouraging residents to get involved. The Hamilton Town Center mailer will also contain an article urging people to join. Applications have been requested and once those applications are received the subcommittee will make recommendation to the RAB.

### **Next Meeting**

Tunstall Lang announced that the next meeting will be held at 7 p.m. on a Wednesday in April. Date and location TBD.